

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☐

Property Name: Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex Inventory Number: B-5122
Address: 400-440 S. Chester Street Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21231 County: Baltimore City
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore East
Property Owner: Roman Catholic Archbishop of Baltimore Tax Account ID Number: 02091774016
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): _____ Tax Map Number: 2
Project: Red Line Corridor Transit Study Agency: Mass Transit Administration
Agency Prepared By: John Milner Associates, Inc.
Preparer's Name: Katherine Larson Farnham Date Prepared: 1/23/2006
Documentation is presented in: Enoch Pratt Free Library--Maryland Room vertical files
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended
Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G
Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:
Name of the District/Property: _____
Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes Listed: ☐ yes
Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex occupies the entire west side of the 400 block of S. Chester Street, between Eastern Ave. and Bank St. From north to south, the complex consists of a large church, rectory, school, parish hall, and convent, all facing east and fronting directly on the sidewalk.

Holy Rosary Church is a large three-story gable-front Romanesque Revival church with twin four-story bell towers flanking the central entrance. The entire building has a slate roof and is sided with rough-faced ashlar granite masonry laid in broken ranges and trimmed with light-colored limestone. The main block is three bays wide, and the towers, which project from the building corners, are each one bay wide and one bay deep. The nave has a parapeted gable roof and arcaded stone trim along the cornice of both the gable and the side walls. The front gable contains a shell-carved niche with a Virgin and child statue, and the second and third floors are occupied by a large rose window. Below the rose window is a steep shed-roofed full-width entrance portico with three elaborately trimmed Roman arched entrance apertures. Each entrance has a Corinthian colonette on each side, delicate bands of classical carved stone trim, and a recessed double door with semicircular transom. The doors are three-panel carved oak doors, and the transoms are stained glass with a center circular window within them. Between the entrances are fluted pilasters. Each of the two bell towers has a pyramidal roof with a cross finial, triple Roman arched openings on the top level housing the bell

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MHT Comments:

John Milner
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

[Signature]
Reviewer, National Register Program

7/26/06
Date

8/7/06
Date

200601706

carillons, and recessed center sections on the first through third levels with stone scroll trim at the top. The third floor levels have paired Roman-arched windows, and the two lower levels have single windows that are larger in size. The north side of the north bell tower has a shallow hip-roofed portico projection and a single round-arched entrance with a double-leaf door similar to those on the front. The church nave is six bays deep with two-story Roman arched windows and small basement windows below a stone belt course. At the rear of the church is a two-story semicircular apse and a one-story-plus-basement hip-roofed sacristy space which wraps around the apse.

Directly south of the church is the rectory, a gable-front Romanesque Revival structure with a slate roof and broken range granite stonework similar to that on the church. The rectory is three-and-one-half stories in height, including an English basement level. The front façade is six bays wide on the two top floors, and five bays wide on the first floor, which has a Roman arched recessed center entrance with carved double-leaf three-panel doors and a semicircular transom similar to entry doors on the church. Stone steps lead to the doors. Windows throughout the building are one-over-one double-hung dark-colored metal sash with stone sills and flush crenelated stone surrounds. The top floor windows have demilunette transoms, and the center two bays on the top two floors are set within a common Roman-arched surround with intricate vine-lead carvings between the two floors. The gabled front parapet has a stone cross at its peak with a quatrefoil ornament carved into the gable end. The basement level projects from the rest of the building and has a carved stone water table on all sides. The rectory is 6-7 bays deep and its north side has two full-height exterior chimneys with a bay window between them.

South of the rectory is the 1950s school building, a relatively utilitarian hip-roofed four-story brick structure. Its front is clad in broken-range ashlar stone, while the sides and rear are brick. It has a gabled false-front parapet with a thick stone cross at the peak, and the main hipped roof has asphalt shingles. The parapet is the top of a slightly projecting full-height center section that is five bays wide, and the main block on either side is one bay wide. Windows are original four-light steel and glass sash with some operable awning panels. On the first floor, the center section of the facade is sided with smooth limestone with a simple cornice. It has a recessed triple center entrance with modern commercial glass and steel doors in the center bay. The entrance is flanked by a single four-light steel window on each side within the center section, plus one additional window on each side in the main block. The upper floors have a three-bay stone surround on the center section, which is surmounted by an ornamental stone panel with a carved book motif. The sides of the center section and the main block have ashlar stone siding. The main block has no front windows above the first floor. The front stonework wraps around the corners and extends one bay into the side facades, which are 10 bays deep overall. Behind this bay, the school has brick siding and large windows consisting of bands of three operable metal windows surmounted by a large expanse of glass block. The first and second floors towards the rear contain a two-story gym or auditorium with double-height windows with stone banded surrounds.

Between the school and the convent is a modern-style one-story pavilion with a hip roof, brick sides, and large exterior plain concrete columns. It is three bays wide in front. The stained glass windows are arranged in a narrow horizontal "clerestory" band at the cornice level, and there is a single stained glass oculus window with keystones below the main windows in each bay. In front of the building is a narrow garden. The center bay contains an exterior marble memorial to parishioners lost in wars.

The convent is a hip-roofed brick three story building with an additional English basement level at the rear due to topography. Its style is vaguely Colonial Revival, and the roof has round-topped dormer vents. Windows are original two-over-two horizontally aligned sash, typically grouped in pairs or triples. It is three bays wide in front with a projecting hexagonal-bay center entrance sided in striated stone. The entrance is flanked by paired windows on each side. The single window on the second floor above the entrance is also in a projecting stone bay with the convent's name carved in it, but there is little ornamentation otherwise. This window and the plain single center window on the third floor are flanked by one set of triple-grouped windows on each side. The concrete foundation projects slightly and has a water table, and there is a stone belt course around the building at the level of the

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Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

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second floor.

Holy Rosary Catholic Church was first established in 1887 to serve a growing Polish population with Masses said in Polish. The first church was located at the corner of Eastern Ave. and Bethel St. and was originally a Presbyterian church. It was purchased by the Roman Catholic Church in 1887 and named Holy Rosary. As Polish immigration into Baltimore continued, the Holy Rosary congregation eventually needed more space and acquired land on S. Chester St., where a large new stone church and rectory were constructed in 1927-1928. The architect of these two buildings is unknown. A cornerstone for the church was laid in 1927. Once the new Holy Rosary Church was complete, the old church was still used on Sundays until 1951, when it became structurally unsafe for use. In early 1956, it was bought by the First National Bank at Broadway and Eastern Ave. and torn down to create a parking lot. In the meantime, the new Holy Rosary campus had continued to expand southward on S. Chester St. Around 1951, it added a school building and a convent with a parish hall between them. On October 26, 1953, Holy Rosary dedicated the marble war memorial located between the convent and the new parish hall, which commemorated 49 servicemen from the parish who had died in World War II and the Korean War. The memorial is located outside the buildings facing the sidewalk. The church continues to have a Polish flavor, though it now hosts services in English.

Holy Rosary is one of a number of early-to-mid twentieth century Christian church-school-clerical housing complexes in the greater Baltimore area. It is a fairly standard example. Aside from being the first specifically Polish Catholic church in Baltimore, its history is not particularly remarkable, and the original church building it occupied is gone. Of the five buildings in the complex, only the church and rectory are architecturally distinctive, and the rectory has been marred somewhat by replacement of its original windows. The remaining buildings in the group are intact but bland utilitarian structures with a few small flourishes. While the church alone might qualify for individual eligibility under NRHP Criterion C and Criteria Consideration A, the remaining buildings and the complex as an overall group are recommended not eligible.

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B-5122

Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

Baltimore County MD

Kate Farnham

June 1 2005

MD SHPO

View of full complex to SW

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Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

June 1, 2005

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View of chwd. to SW

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Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham

June 1, 2005

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Detail of choral entrance bays, to W

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Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

Baltimore City, MD

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June 1, 2005

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Rear/side view of church, to SE

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B. 5122

Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

Baltimore City, MD

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Front view of rectory, to W

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Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farnham 2A DAWGND NNN 10 2010

June 1, 2005

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View of School to NW

#6 of 7 016

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Holy Rosary Roman Catholic Church Complex

Baltimore City, MD

Kate Farahan

June 1, 2005

MD SFPD

View of Court + parish hall, to SW

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